

TENNESSEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FISCAL REVIEW COMMITTEE



FISCAL NOTE

HB 7059 – SB 7025

August 21, 2023

SUMMARY OF BILL: Authorizes a law enforcement agency to assign at least one law enforcement officer to serve as a school resource officer (SRO) at a school during regular school hours and school-sponsored events, if a local education agency (LEA) or public charter school has not adopted a policy authorizing the placement of an SRO. Requires the chief of the law enforcement agency that assigned the law enforcement officer to notify and to provide certain information to school officials, if a law enforcement officer is assigned to a school without a policy by the LEA or public charter school authorizing the assignment of an SRO. Expands the definition of an SRO and the list of individuals authorized to possess and carry a firearm on school grounds to include certain law enforcement officers assigned to a school. Applies to the 2023-24 school year and subsequent years.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Other Fiscal Impact – The Appropriations Act of 2023 allocated recurring funding of \$140,000,000 for SRO Program Grants. As of August 2023, \$64,575,000 in SRO Program Grants have been issued. To the extent that additional SRO Program Grants are awarded, there will be an increase in state expenditures from the SRO Grant Fund. The net local fiscal impact is estimated to be not significant.

Assumptions:

- The Appropriations Act for FY23-24 allocated in Public Chapter 418 of 2023 \$140,000,000 in recurring funding to establish a School Resource Officer (SRO) Grant Fund to place a trained, armed security guard at every public school.
- The Statewide SRO Program Grant provides funding to local law enforcement entities to place one full-time SRO in each Kindergarten through 12 public school and public charter school in Tennessee. Local law enforcement agencies are eligible to apply for funding not to exceed \$75,000 per year, per SRO.
- The proposed legislation does not require a law enforcement agency to assign a law enforcement officer to serve as an SRO at a school; however, it does authorize a law enforcement agency to assign an SRO to a school even if an LEA or public charter school has not adopted a policy authorizing a law enforcement officer to serve as an SRO.

- There are approximately 1,837 schools in this state and the average cost of an SRO is estimated to be \$73,150.
- Based on the 2022 Safe Schools Report, there are 1,301 schools with existing SROs.
- It is assumed that if a law enforcement agency does assign a law enforcement officer to serve as an SRO at a school, and an LEA or public charter school has not adopted a policy authorizing a law enforcement officer to serve as an SRO, the law enforcement agency will be eligible to apply for the SRO Program Grant.
- It is estimated that the SRO Program Grant of up to \$75,000 per year, per SRO will be sufficient to cover the costs of employing and assigning an SRO at a school; therefore, the fiscal impact to local government is estimated to be not significant.
- The Department of Safety has issued 116 contracts for SRO Program Grants totaling \$64,575,000 through August 2023.
- The proposed legislation may expand the number of eligible applicants and increase the number of SRO Program Grants; however, the \$140,000,000 recurring funding allocated in Public Chapter 418 of 2023 will be sufficient to cover any additional grant awards.
- The precise amount of additional SRO Program Grants issued is dependent on multiple unknown factors and cannot be reasonably determined. Any additional grants issued will result in an increase in state expenditures to the SRO Grant Fund, an increase in local revenue and an offsetting increase in local expenditures.
- The net fiscal impact to local government is estimated to be not significant.

CERTIFICATION:

The information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.



Krista Lee Carsner, Executive Director

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